THE
CATHOLIC RADICAL

"...to foster a society based on creed instead of greed." Peter Maurin

April/May 2024 ***Price: For whatever it's worth.***

Seek Peace and Pursue It

by Larry Rosenwald

Editor's Note: The following is excerpted from a talk given at John Carroll University in Cleveland on February 27, 2024. The author is the retired director of Wellesley College's Peace & Justice Studies Program.

I'm offering these observations in safety, far away from the horrible things done by Hamas and the horrible things being done by Israel. And I can't imagine that any Israeli or Palestinian is impatiently waiting to hear a pacifist's perspective on what's going on, the needs of the hour are so intense. I offer that perspective nonetheless because pacifists who want a world without war need to imagine how they would run it. And also because it is so awful to read of what the Israeli army is doing in Gaza, what Israeli settlers are doing in the West Bank, of what Israeli journalists and ministers of state are saying to dehumanize Palestinians, to read and hear and to feel isolated, powerless, silent, and because any occasion for speaking out is a precious deliverance from the deadening passivity we risk being condemned to.

"Seek peace and pursue it," "*bakesh shalom v'rodfehu*." I take my title from Psalm 34 because I want to make clear that the pursuit of peace is as much a part of Jewish tradition as is the annihilation of Amalek, which has been more in the news. There are many pertinent passages on peace in Jewish tradition. I recommend Evelyn Willcock's **Pacifism and the Jews.**

Pacifism rejects the making of war across the board. Pacifists regard war the way Gandalf regards the One Ring: whatever you think you can do with it, however fair your visions of what you could accomplish, do not use it; you cannot control it, it will master and betray you.

Pacifists reject the idea of just war, developed by Saint Augustine as a means to make it possible for Christians, who were then pacifists, to support the wars of the state. Pacifists also reject the idea of humane war.

I hold fast to the idea, principle, axiom, blessing that we are all created *b'tselem elohim*, in the image of God, our enemies no less than we, soldiers no less than civilians. I oppose war because it requires us to deny that principle; it in fact exalts that denial.

A pacifist has to condemn both the Hamas attacks on October 7th and Israel's war in Gaza, and both condemnations arise from the principle just stated. No claim that this is what decolonization looks like (in defense of the Hamas attacks), that this is what just war looks like (in defense of Israel's war) matters more than that principle. For decolonizers on the left, for recolonizers, ethnic cleansers, and zealots on the right, for all for whom the idealized end justifies the horrific means, these paired condemnations are too even-handed. I sometimes distrust even-handedness; it feels weak. But I hold to it here.

Right now militants of Hamas and Israel dream of eliminating the other. At the moment, both groups are unwilling to give up their dreams. Peace is for them

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Insanity

by Scott Schaeffer-Duffy

The US plans to spend more than $188,000,000,000 over the next five years on new nuclear weapons. This astronomical amount translates to $553 from each American man, woman, and child, enough money to fund Medicare for all and to subsidize affordable housing, college, and conversion to green transportation and power generation. The massive increase in spending on nuclear weapons comes at a time when the Union of Concerned Scientists says the risk of nuclear war is at its highest in decades, and Pope Francis says the possession of such weapons is sinful.

While our attention is required to stop ongoing wars, to help refugees, asylum seekers, and other immigrants, to address the climate emergency, and to bring other crises to the public and the government's attention, we must not forget that nuclear weapons pose an imminent threat of annihilation. Their destructive capability dwarfs anything else, so much so that many of us put them out of our minds.

Meanwhile, in Groton and New London, Connecticut, for $114.1 billion, General Dynamics is constructing 12 Columbia class submarines, each capable of ending the world. Politicians fear cutting military contracts because they create jobs, but economists agree that the same funding on civilian projects employs more people and strengthens the economy for the future.

We must all follow Archbishop John Wester's wise council in his pastoral letter *Living In the Light of Christ's Peace*. If you need a copy, we'll give you one. Educate yourselves, your pastors, and your bishops. The world never needed peacemakers more urgently. Ω

Seek Peace

(Continued from Page 1)

second-best at best.

What does a pacifist say should happen now? It's in some way an unfair question, since it asks pacifists to weigh in at a moment that they would, had they had the power, have done everything possible to avert. Or as the Jewish American journalist Peter Beinart puts it, "It feels a little bit like someone has driven a car into a ditch and then is asking you how to get out of it." But it can't be right simply to refuse to answer, and in any case, presumably you'd want to help the driver get the car out of the ditch regardless of how it got there. So I'll answer the question, within the constraints of pacifism – no war – and within the limits of what's possible.

The first thing is to get the car out of the ditch. In the present context, that means getting some sort of ceasefire, however long, and the release of some hostages. Towards that end, every strategy is of value. Successful campaigns against wars are various. Radicals criticize moderates and vice-versa, but in the end both contribute. The campaign against Israel's war is already as various as any. Among its modes of action: letters to American congresspeople, online petitions for ceasefire, municipal resolutions for ceasefire, blocking roads, blocking access to the Statue of Liberty, self-immolation (on December 1st, in front of the Israeli Consulate in Atlanta and now again on February 25th, in front of the Israeli Embassy in Washington, DC), support of artists and writers being banned for supporting a ceasefire, refusal to pay taxes that fund American support of the Israeli military, displaying Palestinian flags, voting uncommitted, supporting journalists aiming to provide information to Israeli Jews about what is happening in Gaza, and the South African charge of genocide brought against Israel at the International Court of Justice.

I am aware that most of these measures are focused chiefly on influencing Israel, not at all or nowhere near as much on influencing Hamas, and that cannot be right; a ceasefire requires two parties. Whatever means there are of influencing Hamas towards a ceasefire and the release of its hostages seem to me of value. Also of value are the ongoing negotiations themselves. Pacifists focused on direct action often disparage diplomats and governments, but they too have work to do. Pacifists have much in common with diplomats, actually, though neither group consistently recognizes this.

When I read stories about negotiations between Israel and Hamas, I note that both sides are being described as rational entities. The sentences of the accounts somewhat resemble sentences describing unions and management during a strike. "The two sides are far apart," "Negotiations continue," "Hamas stated its demands," "Israel stated its demands," "There is agreement on some matters but other matters remain unresolved," etc. Such sentences allow for a ceasefire; they may not lead to one, but they could. Sentences about Israelis as Nazis, or about Hamas as worse than the Nazis, whatever their truth value, cannot. Who negotiates with Nazis?

A friend of mine said to me, "Okay, ceasefire, but what next?" A fair question. In one sense an easy question: end the Occupation, that being in my judgment the underlying cause of conflict. In another sense, a tragically hard question. No Israeli government in the foreseeable future will do anything of the kind. No Israeli government will do even more intermediate things like releasing non-Hamas Palestinian prisoners, helping put on Palestinian elections, accepting the 1967 borderlines as the basis for a political settlement, re-admitting Hamas to Palestinian political life if it observes a ceasefire and agrees to abide by decisions made by Palestinians in referendums. Whatever steps can be taken now are smaller, more gradual, indirect, and slow.

But getting to a ceasefire is not just okay. I am writing this one day after the Israeli army fired on a group of hungry Gazans trying to get food from relief trucks. To be fair, the army spokesman called the group "a mob,"and said the "Gazans died in stampedes." But I'm with the Israeli journalist Dalia Scheindlin, who wrote, "As of this writing, at least 112 Palestinians are dead, over 700 wounded. Social media can battle out which side killed how many, but I know the truth: the war killed all of them. It has to stop." Ceasefire, being at least a partial stoppage, would be not just okay but a miracle.

I was in East Germany and the former Czechoslovakia when the former was a repressive Communist state and the latter under repressive Russian control. Those facts seemed immutable in 1970, but the Berlin Wall came down in 1989. What we think is immutable might not be.

My last word are some lines by Tracy Smith, from a poem called "Everybody's Autobiography:"

In a dream, my children
Glisten inside raindrops, or teardrops.
Like strangers, like seeds of children.
I will only be allowed to claim them
If I consent to love everyone's children.

Ω

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"All the News We Could Fit in this Size Print"

The New Yuck Times

THE WHETHER
It might be a nice day, but, then again, it might not. Whether appears B4

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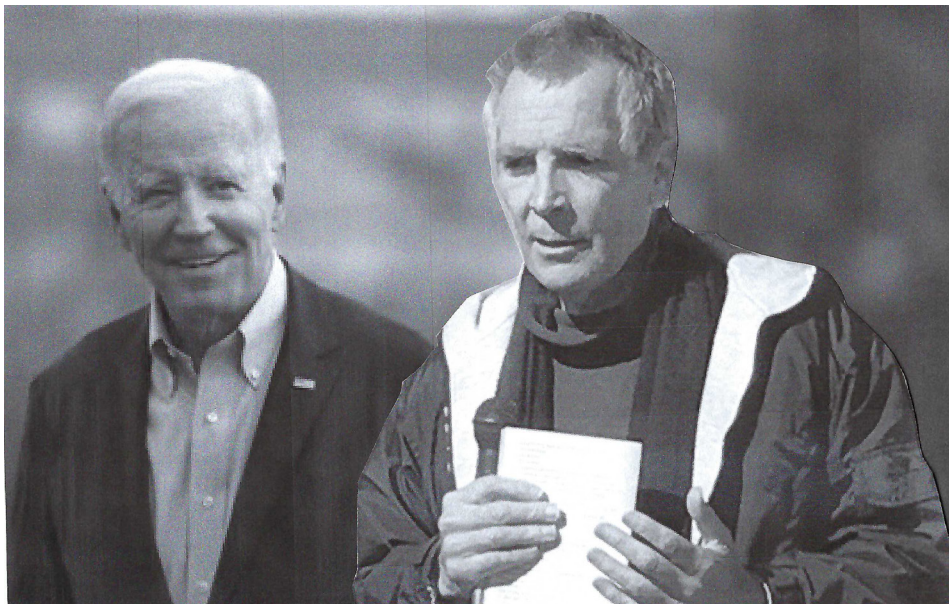

President Biden and Father Steve Kelly, SJ take questions outside the White House

President Biden Sees the Lite

By IMA KRYSTIAN

WASHINGTON, DC—While on the campaign road to Damascus, Maryland, President Biden made a stop for dinner where a waitress asked which high-class or imported beer he wanted. The President ordered a bottle of Bud Lite he spotted behind the bar. After his first sip, Biden received a text: "Joe, Joe, why are you persecuting me?" His aides saw the Lite, but did not see the text.

So shaken up was the President that he later issued this statement:

"I am a Democrat, born in Scranton, Pennsylvania. At the feet of Lyndon Johnson, I was educated strictly in the Cold War and was zealous for the status quo, just as all of you are today. I persecuted feminists like Anita Hill. I voted for the first and second Gulf wars. I voted against the Chemical and Biological Weapons Reduction Act. I refused to consider signing the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). I rushed additional weapons to Israel to commit genocide in Gaza. I did not permanently halt climate-destroying fossil fuel infrastructure. I did not rescue migrants at the US border, people on death row, or unborn children from imminent death. But all of that will now change."

After a retreat led by Father Steve Kelly, SJ, Biden promised to make his Catholic faith central to policies. Soon after he saw the Lite, the President signed the TPNW, cut military aid to Israel, Saudi Arabia, and other human-rights abusing nations, proposed free pre-natal and child care for all Americans, proposed welcoming policies towards immigrants fleeing violence and poverty, proposed mandatory living wages, adjusted annually for inflation, and promised to work for massive cuts in the military budget.

Biden hopes to meet this week with women, blue collar workers, people of color, indigenous people, and all those who feel left out, like fans of the Detroit Lions, Buffalo Bills, and the movie "Barbie."

The President concluded, "I want every idealist in America to know, the fix is not in. Your dreams can come true."

Pope Okays Women Deacons

By A. BOUT TYME

VATICAN CITY— After ordaining the first woman deacon at Saint Peter's Basilica, Pope Francis nodded approvingly as Deacon Rosalie Riegele gave a daring homily calling all Catholics to become Christians, serving the poor, eschewing war, and dancing as often as possible.

Riegle, a long-time Catholic Worker, said, "Giving women a voice in the pulpit will revitalize the Church and reduce the occurrence of boring homilies."

Blynken Becomes Baby Monitor

By HUGH WYNN

From climate to war, this baby is mad.

OSLO, NORWAY—U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blynken, with his aides Wynken and Nod, announced yesterday that, beginning with adding the letter "h" to his first name, the career diplomat would prioritize justice from now on.

In front of a Gustav Vigeland's statue "The Angry Baby" in Oslo, Blynken said, "The US has pissed off too many babies. There's no way I'll ever get a Nobel Prize unless I turn things around."

Who Dorothy Day Was to Me

Editor's Note: The following are reflections on Dorothy Day, the co-founder of the Catholic Worker Movement, by people who knew her personally. Dorothy, 83, died at New York City's Maryhouse Catholic Worker in 1980.

Cliff Lichter

Born in 1937, Cliff met Dorothy in 1969 at Saint Joseph's Catholic Worker in New York City.

When I think of Dorothy Day, I think of one word: "continuation." It was a frequent word of hers. "We continue." "We don't slack off," because we reach the heights when we allow our faith to continue, until we live in God, period. Dorothy put her whole physical and spiritual energy into what she did. She never quit.

Martha Hennessy

Born in 1955, Martha is one of Dorothy's nine grandchildren.

Granny will always be a presence in my life. Her voice and words, the movements of her hands, her room at St. Joseph's, her visits to Vermont, our summers together at the Tivoli farm. She was proud of us grandkids, nine in all. She encouraged us all to be present, to care, to love. As I age, Granny's influence continues to grow in my life.

The power of it can take my breath away at certain moments of being handcuffed in front of the White House, or standing at Rafah Gate as a woman weeps, blocked from returning to her family in Gaza. How far can I follow this Gospel of Mercy that she has laid out for us? She gave us eyes to see the staggering beauty and pain of this world.

Sometimes the memories are so sharp I can't bear them.

Willa Bickham & Brendan Walsh

Born in 1942, Willa & Brendan met Dorothy in 1966 at a Peacemaker Conference held at the Catholic Worker Farm in Tivoli, New York.

In Tivoli, we talked to Dorothy at some of the sessions and at mealtime. It felt like being with an old friend. We learned so much more about nonviolence.

Dorothy was one of our first guests at Viva House. She came in October 1968 for the trial of the Catonsville 9. Our house was truly overcrowded. The Convent up the street provided Dorothy with a place to sleep. It was wonderful to share meals and conversations with Dorothy.

In November of that year, Dorothy published our letter in the paper that we

were starting a new house in Baltimore. She gave us the Catholic Worker mailing list for Maryland and $2,000.

We learned so much more about nonviolence from Dorothy. She became a very nurturing friend to us. Always low key and supportive.

Anne Marie (Fraser) Kaune

Born in 1948, Anne Marie met Dorothy in 1972 when she joined Saint Joseph's Catholic Worker in New York City.

"May God protect me from gloomy saints," remarked Teresa of Avila. Dorothy Day was no gloomy saint. It was a singular joy to live and work in her company from 1972 until her death in 1980. So much to remember and savor, confined to a paragraph. So let's talk saints. Dorothy loved and drew strength and guidance from the saints and loved to quote them: "Love is an exchange of gifts," attributed to Ignatius of Loyola; John of the Cross: "Where there is no love put love and you will find love," Catherine of Sienna: "All the way to heaven is heaven for He said, 'I am the Way,'" and so many from Teresa of Avila. She savored these words with gratitude and joy, seeing them as guideposts on her pilgrimage. She often said we are all called to be saints.

Her vocation was nourished by her life of deep prayer. She kept long lists of people in her breviary for whom she prayed. Psalms in the morning with her coffee, daily Mass and silent prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, evening Vespers, and spiritual reading marked a life I was privileged to witness, and, in a small way, share. Such deep prayer fortified her for a life totally devoted to love, service, and commitment to peacemaking. I imagine seekers in future generations finding Dorothy's life and words as guideposts on their pilgrimage, fortified, through her intercession, for a life of joyful love and service.

Jeff Dietrich & Catherine Morris

Born in 1934, Catherine met Dorothy in 1973, during a ten-day jail sentence in support of the United Farm Workers. Born in 1946, Jeff met Dorothy when she came to Los Angeles to testify at Pat Jordan's trial for draft resistance.

We visited Dorothy at the Catholic Worker farm in Tivoli, where the anarcho-pacifist group called the Peacemakers was holding a retreat. The farm was having, an ever-present CW problem, plumbing! The septic tanks were overflowing because too many guests were flushing toilet paper down the toilet instead of putting it in the specifically marked waste basket where it should have been.

I went to get a mop and bucket to clean it up, when who did I meet coming down the hallway, but Dorothy Day, who at that time was 77 years old! Dorothy was just that kind of woman, she practiced what she preached, but she was no saint.

At the dinner table, she objected to the young people's food complaints. Some wanted no onions in the food, some wanted no spicy food, some wanted no

butter, to which Dorothy said: "Eat what's put in front of you." When served mashed potatoes, though, Dorothy moaned: "Why don't people peel these potatoes?"

Inspired by Dorothy, 90-year-old Catherine and I will celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary on August 6th, Hiroshima Day, with a big party at the front gates of Vandenberg Air Force Base; afterwards we will cross the line to get arrested together to protest nuclear weapons, the current war in Ukraine, as well as the devastation in Palestine.

Pat & Kathleen Jordan

Pat was born in 1944 and Kathleen in 1945. He met Dorothy in New York in 1968 and she met her in 1969.

One of the phrases of St. Augustine that Dorothy liked to repeat was, "Love is an exchange of gifts." And Dorothy was an inveterate exchanger of gifts. Kathleen and I have a beautiful carved ebony statue of Mary that she gave us spontaneously one day. And when she opened a letter from an old friend with a check "for bread and roses," she told us, her face lighting up, that this was code for: "Dorothy, this check is for you to do something you would enjoy." And then, she said to us, "I'm going to take you to see *Fiddler on the Roof* on Broadway, which she did—and then treated us to a bagel and cream cheese at Chock Full O' Nuts on the way.

If anything needs to be underscored about Dorothy, it is not simply her gifted writing but the unexampled nature of her prayer. When you saw her praying, you knew exactly what real prayer is. She began her days "with the psalms and a cup of coffee." We have her copy of **The Psalms of the Jerusalem Bible**. She underlined in Psalm 51: **"…in your great tenderness wipe away my faults;"** and **"renew my joy, keep my spirit steady and willing."** Underlined in red ink from Psalm 90: **"Let us wake in the morning filled with your love/ and sing and be happy all our days."**

Dorothy comforted us in many ways, chiefly by her example of a generous, insightful heart. She was a teacher—always. She inscribed a vibrant book on shells to our young children, growing up across the pathway from her Spanish

Dorothy reads to grandchildren in 1958 on New York's Staten Island

Camp beach bungalow:"Dear Hannah and Justin," she wrote. "Much love to both of you, and hope you will collect shells, and stones, too, and learn that 'the world will be saved by beauty.'"

A giver of beautiful, enduring gifts, indeed.

Kate Hennessy

Born in 1960, Kate is one of Dorothy's nine grandchildren.

When thinking of my grandmother, I think of the Catholic Worker and my experiences as a child running amok at the Tivoli farm. What a gift—to have been exposed from my earliest memories to a different way of being in the world—while accepting it all as a child does. I didn't understand a word of Dorothy's talks to the grown-ups, but I felt at home at the CW.

I remember her physical presence, first when she was still robust and active, always either returning from a trip or about to leave, and then as a failing 80-year-old when I was able to sit with her in her room at Maryhouse. To me she was magnetic. I always felt this sense of awareness of her, of her walk, her voice, her stories, and her laughter. I miss her laughter, for it was also my mother Tamar's laughter.

It's difficult to separate memories of my grandmother from memories of my mother. I think of them together even to this day—what utterly unique, strong, powerful women they were. One lasting gift both have given me is a profound belief that the world is good, that people are good at their core. And that you can, no matter how poor and precarious your own life may be, help nurture such fundamental goodness. What more powerful gift could a child have received?

Monica Ribar Cornell

Born in 1943, Monica met Dorothy in 1963 at the Catholic Worker house on Chrystie Street in New York City.

When I arrived, on Birmingham Sunday, [the day when a KKK bomb at the 16th Street Baptist Church killed four girls and injured 22 others], Dorothy was out of town. I had just met Tom Cornell. When Dorothy returned, she welcomed me warmly. She already knew my parents, who were involved in setting up a Catholic Worker house in Cleveland in the 30s. I was in awe of her, having heard about her from my parents and others over the years. My father got me a library copy of **The Long Loneliness** when I was 10. Dorothy approved of Tom's and my courtship as it developed. She had a wonderful way of speaking to one's condition, that Quaker phrase. She read your feelings and offered helpful advice. She's still an inspiration to me. I continue to read **The Long Loneliness,** and it holds up wonderfully. I often turn to Dorothy's writings and example for inspiration. It encourages one to preserve because her own perseverance was so admirable.

Brian Terrell

Born in 1956, Brian met Dorothy in 1965 at saint Joseph's Catholic Worker in New York City.

In the last years of her life, Dorothy Day was often irritated by the personality cult that was already growing up around her. The admiration of strangers was not a balm to her, to say the least. "Why do they want to talk with me?" she sometimes complained about the well-wishers she attracted. She was "just an old woman who lives upstairs," she said. If these admirers were not motivated by idle curiosity but were truly interested in the work and vision

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On Dorothy Day

(Continued on Page 2)

of the Catholic Worker, Dorothy reasoned, they would be more interested in talking with the young people who were making the soup, planting the garden, putting out the newspaper, walking the picket line or going to jail than with her. She could be more gracious, sometimes, responding to the angry abuse of demented or intoxicated guests at our table than to the pious adulation of the good people who read in a magazine that she was a "living saint" and wanted to get a look at her while they still could. In the former, she recognized "Christ in His most distressing disguise" deserving of her patience and deference. The latter were just wasting her time and their own.

One example comes to mind. A "friend of the family" put his face in hers and shouted "Dorothy Day, you ain't shit, you never was shit and you will never be shit!" Dorothy took it all with a shrug, but about the same time some stranger held her hand, looked at her with awe and admiration, and told her she was a saint—at that Dorothy looked like she had been slapped, pulled her hand away and ran.

Dan Mauk

Born in 1952, Dan met Dorothy in 1975 when he moved into Saint Joseph's Catholic Worker in New York City. For his reflection, Dan submitted Jeffry Odell Korgen's depiction of an evening Dan spent watching television with Dorothy.

Mike Boover

Born in 1951, Michael met Dorothy in 1971 in Worcester, Massachusetts.

Dorothy's book, **Loaves and Fishes**, really appealed to me as an undergraduate. Thanks to Mike True, she spoke at Worcester State College. I was thoroughly smitten by her. A tad nervously, she relayed to her listeners, with morally crystal-clear eloquence, the Christ-centered vision and mission of the Catholic Worker—do the works of mercy as the antidote to the works of war.

In 1972, several of us in Worcester began the Mustard Seed Catholic Worker. As we continue feeding the hungry and decrying war, Dorothy remains our teacher, at once bold and uncompromising, yet humble of heart. She is a guide, exemplar, and blessed bearer of the sacred vision that she and Peter Maurin came upon. How challenged and especially called we are to have come upon their shared vision. Because of it, we live in the light of Day, attuned to the "Light of the World," and that has made all the difference!

Michael Harank

Born in 1953, Michael met Dorothy when Holy Cross professor David O'Brien took him in 1975 to Boston's Paulist Center to see her receive the Isaac Hecker Award.

I vividly remember a story from the last year of her long life when I brought a meal to Dorothy's room at Maryhouse. She asked me to stay with her while she ate even though her appetite was not great — suffering as she did from congestive heart failure and fatigue.

We talked in between small bites of bread and soup. She would repeatedly ask me questions about my family and how did I come to the Catholic Worker and about the morning glories that she could see outside her second floor window. "You are the one who planted them, yes? How beautiful it is to see them as I sit by my window and from my bed. Thank you. We need such beauty in our city lives."

She really listened intently even as she was practically deaf in one ear. When I asked her how she slept at night, especially with the daily noise of the Hell's Ángels motorcycles roaring down 3rd Street, she replied, "I don't hear the noise because I sleep with my deaf ear up."

Her sharply curved chin often leaned into the palm of her hand. Her clear blue eyes peered into one's soul.

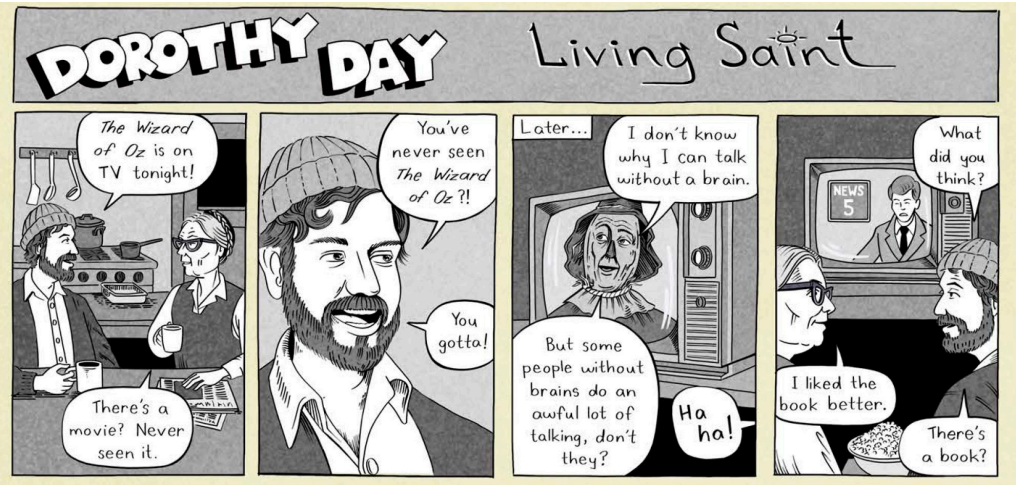
After she finished eating and listening to my stories, she suddenly said, "Why don't you share a small glass of sherry with me? My doctor says it's good for my heart." She said this with a bit of a twinkle in her eye. "Good idea," was my delighted response.

Dorothy said, "Let's make a toast before we drink. You make the toast, Michael." I said, "Dorothy, you deserve to make the toast, not me." Her face took on a pensive look. Then, after a contemplative moment of many years of life, lived in noisy New York slums among the poor, all the cumulative "harsh and dreadful love" of life in community and numerous arrests and incarcerations for peace/justice, she raised her glass and said, "Michael, here's to the revolution—the nonviolent one, of course."

Meg Brodhead

Born in 1954, Meg met Dorothy in 1977 at Maryhouse in New York City.

I was so unsure of myself while I lived at Maryhouse (1976-79) that I rarely talked


DOROTHY DAY
Living Saint
The Wizard of Oz is on TV tonight!
There's a movie? Never seen it.
You've never seen The Wizard of Oz?!
You gotta!
Later...
I don't know why I can talk without a brain.
But some people without brains do an awful lot of talking, don't they?
Ha ha!
What did you think?
NEWS 5
I liked the book better.
There's a book?

Excerpted from the forthcoming Paulist Press book **Dorothy Day: Radical Devotion** *by Jeffry Odell Korgen and Christopher Cardinale (Fall, 2024).*

with Dorothy, and my personal memories about her are scant. One conversation I joined occurred in the house chapel with her and several other Catholic Workers. A group of "military wives" wanted to give us cushions or seat covers for the chapel chairs. Maybe they were handmade. We met to decide whether or not to accept them.

As I remember it, to a person—except for Dorothy—we wanted none of it, no matter how cottage industry style this offer may have been. The attitude was that we wouldn't be bought off by such a gesture from people who colluded in military violence by partnering with and maybe valorizing the big time sinners who engaged in it as a career.

Some say Dorothy could be bossy, but not that day. Her suggestion that we accept the peace offering, this acknowledgement of our aims and means, didn't win us over, and she didn't overrule our refusal. Maybe it was her anarchism, maybe the letting go of age.

Now heading into that age myself, I can only see the pride of youth at work that day. The pride of Catholic Workers! This one, certainly. It was much easier for me to disdain that gift than to talk to Dorothy. She's helped me learn to regret my own sins more than despise anyone else's. Ω

Catholic Worker Calendar

March 29—Stations of the Cross: Please join us in a 1.2-mile procession reflecting on how Christ is being crucified today. Gather at 52 Mason Street at 11:45 AM. Bread and soup will be offered afterwards.

Rita Corbin

April 9 & 23, May 14— Evening Prayer: Please come join us for silent meditation, prayer, and Taizé chant at 52 Mason Street. Refreshments to follow. 7:00 PM.

Leave Nothing but an Opening

by Sara Kallock

Editor's Note: Sara Kallock, a thirty-six-year-old educator, activist, artist, and poet, has devoted her entire life to defending the vulnerable. She is receiving treatment for pancreatic cancer and continues to speak out for justice.

What if I died leaving nothing?
Surely, I have so little to give.

The woman in the next room
is searching for a hospital bed.

She and her friend are waiting
for the call that a room has been found.

Something is wrong on top
of her cancer and they are anxious.

They are killing time talking.
I can hear the angle of sharp
tones and hostile words.

"Bus loads," "Pelosi" "Immigrant"—
words that say we are full
even in your need.

There is a crisis and I can hear
their words choose a side: go away.

The crisis is: a child arriving alone
at a checkpoint with a dessicated bottle.

The crisis is: a Haitian student
just settling in,
now being moved across state.

The crisis is: a drowned body
Bobbing limply down the Rio Grande.

The crisis is: a family huddled
on concrete behind bars
awaiting deportation.

The nurse comes into their room;
They have found a bed.
They have not been told to go away.

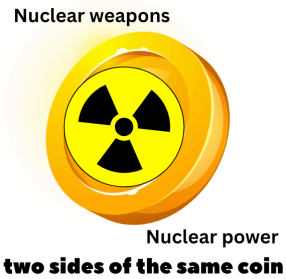
I don't know if I will leave much
to this world. But I hope I'll have
never said go away. Ω

Urgent Action!

Xcel's Minnesota Nuclear Reactor Comment Period Starting Soon!

Get your pencils (or your virtual signature) ready!

Make Your Comment Before March 30



Nuclear power is the cousin of nuclear war and carries its own dangers. Please join Nukewatch in doing something easy to help protect the Earth we all depend on from more radioactive waste that will be dangerous for a million years. It threatens accidental radiation releases, like the recent, 829,000-gallon leak of radioactive tritium wastewater which may have reached the Mississippi River.

What Can I Do?

Add your voice to say 'I will not stand by while Xcel poisons our water!'
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Mason Street Musings

A friend at Nazareth House Catholic Worker in the Philippines wrote me a heartfelt letter asking my advice about the morality of taking a break. Like many Catholic Workers, this friend had been toiling long days, by himself, for quite some time. Nonetheless, also like most Catholic Workers, he felt guilty at the idea of even a short sabbatical.

I replied to him:

"It's my belief that we are continuously called by Christ who approaches us, like He did saints Peter and Matthew, in the midst of our busy lives and asks us to follow Him. Peter and Matthew responded immediately. Most people are too tied to whatever routine they have established to take such leaps of faith. When God called you to begin your work, you responded. Now, God could very well be calling you to a rest. Remember, his yoke is easy and burden is light. Don't feel guilty or anxious about following God to either a restful break or perilous enterprise. In every situation, the ultimate outcome is known to God alone and not to us."

Ironically, when I later re-read them, my own words shamed me. Fifteen years ago, Claire and I went to Boston to see Martin Sheen receive the Isaac Hecker Award for Social Justice. After the formal program, I told Martin how much Claire and I enjoyed his son Emilio's movie "The Way," about a 500-mile-long pilgrimage called the Camino de Santiago Compostela. He replied, "If you ever want to go, please tell me and I'll support you."

Since then, Claire has often raised the idea that we take up Martin's offer and do the pilgrimage, but I have consistently said, "We can't take that much time off," "We're too busy," "We don't have people to cover for us while we are away," etc., but reading my own words reminded me that God is just as likely to call us to risk jail for peace or take in a difficult new guest, as to invite us to deepen our prayer and personal life on a pilgrimage. Each require trust that God, not Claire or I, is master of our future. So, I wrote to Martin, and he replied immediately in the positive.

We have begun asking advice from friends who have already completed the Camino, folks who call the journey "amazing" and "life changing." Three weeks ago, after Mass on Sunday morning, we hiked five miles. The following week, we hiked seven miles and today, we hiked nine. We are collecting gear from relatives, friends, hikers who sell gently used items, and what else we need from a co-op. Ideally, we will each carry less than 19 pounds on our backs. One guide book encourages pilgrims to leave watches, cameras, and cell phones behind to fully live in the moment with simplicity. Everyone says we will meet wonderful people who will deepen our faith in humanity. We are excited, even if more than a little bit anxious about hiking 500 miles over the Pyrenees from France to Spain's Atlantic coast.

But story after story in my book **Nothing Is Impossible**, affirms that extraordinary things come to pass when we take leaps of faith. Since such leaps seem more and more fundamental to a healthy spiritual life, we ask you to pray for us on our journey.

Blessings to all of you! Ω

Scott

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